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PROMPTLY AND NEATLY EXECUTED.

THE STORY TELLER.

Seed Time and Harvest.

BY T. B. ARTHUR.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Mr. Willey, a lawyer of some ability, was sit-

ting in his office one day, when an elderly gen-

tleman came in and asked to have a few words

of conference with him. The stranger was poli-

tely handed a chair, and asked his business.

"You hold claims against Porterfield?" said

the old gentleman as he seated himself.

"I do," replied Willey, whose manner instantly

changed—his brow contracting and his eye be-

coming stern.

"Are you aware there have been several meet-

ings of your creditors, and that there is a strong

disposition manifested to give Porterfield a

chance to recover himself?"

"I never attend meetings of creditors."

"But, now that you are aware of the fact I

state, are you not willing to join with the rest of

us in helping an unfortunate man to get upon

his feet again?"

"No! I have my own interest to look after,

not other people's."

"It is your intention, then, to push through

the suits you have commenced?"

"Certainly. I am not a man of half-way mea-

sures."

"Notwithstanding you sacrifice the interests

of others by what you do?"

"Let others take care of themselves. I have

enough to do to take care of my own concerns,

without meddling with the concerns of others."

"If you go on, there will be no hope for the

unfortunate debtor."

"That is his own look-out, not mine," was col-

ly replied.

"Pardon me for suggesting that an act like this

concerns you as much, almost, as it concerns him.

No man ever deliberately does injury to another,

without himself suffering therefrom, at some

future day, as much as the party he has injured;

although it may be after a different fashion."

"I'll trust to all that, sir. Mr. Porterfield is

in my power, and I mean to make him feel it."

"What object can you have in view, Mr. Wil-

ley, in seeking to destroy a man in this way?"

"I do not know that you have any right to in-

quire into reasons for my conduct. I am at least

sured that I never gave you any such right," re-

plied Mr. Willey.

"I claim no right but the common right of

humanity," said the old gentleman. "If you do

not acknowledge that, my interference in this

matter can only be viewed as impertinent."

"It is certainly not authorized by any relation

existing between us, and therefore I cannot

view it in any other light than the one you have

intimated," was the haughty reply.

The old gentleman bowed and arose from his

chair; but, before leaving the office of the law-

enemy. Time did not soothe the irritation he

at first experienced—for the merchant, who was

successful in business, built himself an elegant

house immediately opposite the more humble

residence of the lawyer, and did it, Willey was

weak enough to think, by way of making him

feel his inferiority in point of worldly wealth.

Year after year the handsome dwelling of the

merchant stood smiling in the warm sunshine,

but never was looked upon by Willey without

his seeing in every part of it from cornice to

pavement, a leer of triumph. The face of Por-

terfield, too, when he bowed to him, had the

same expression, and it was always an effort for

him to return the bow with anything more than

the coldest civility.

At last, Willey began, as the saying is, to feel

his feet under him. He had talents and shrewd-

ness, combined with perseverance and industry,

and these gradually obtained him business.—

From yielding an income barely sufficient for

the ordinary wants of social life, his practice

gave him something over, and he began to ac-

cumulate. As soon as he had a few thousand

dollars to invest, he looked around him for the

means of making it productive. With the mere

interest of his little capital, he had no thought

of being content. He expected it to yield a

deal more than that. So he became a gambler

in the stock market, and through the aid and

instruction of one of the knowing and secretly

operating ones, a successful gambler. He rarely

lost, and not unfrequently doubled his invest-

ments. In this school he learned utterly to dis-

regard the interests of others, and to grasp at

money as common property, to be obtained by

the shrewdest and held by the strongest. If his

neighbor had ten thousand dollars, and he could

get them transferred into his pocket by means

of some sharp operation in the money market,

he never stopped to trouble himself in the mat-

ter of equivalents. When, therefore, he once

got a fair start in the race for wealth, he ad-

vanced with rapid strides. By associating with him-

self, in his profession, a young lawyer of equal

industry, but less grasping cupidity, Willey man-

aged not to have any part of his business suffer

on account of the attention he had necessarily

to pay to the stock market and his operations

therein.

In the mean time, the large family of Porter-

field was beginning to make heavy demands on

his income. His son had to be sent to college,

and his daughters to expensive boarding-schools.

Added to this came a long pressure in the money

market, producing a disturbance in trade, and

sweeping hundreds of unsubstantial mer-

chants from the arena of business. Like almost

every one else who had anything to lose, Porter-

field was a sufferer at various points. The loss

of a few hundreds of dollars here, and a few

thousands there, repeated with alarming fre-

quency, loosened the foundation upon which his

prosperity had been resting, and threatened to

overwhelm him in ruin.

With the coolness of a man who prepares

himself for the worst, Porterfield withdrew his

son from college ere he had half completed his

education—and his daughters from their expen-

sive schools. The former was placed in a store,

and received a salary sufficient to furnish his

wardrobe. But preparations for the threatened

storm did not stop here. His elegant residence

was sold, and the amount realized thereon

thrown into his business, in order to give it re-

lief; the family retiring into a smaller house,

and diminishing all their expenses.

"With our sails reefed and our vessel light-

ened, I think we shall outlive the storm," the

merchant said to his wife, after they were snugly

settled in their new home. "Our expenses

have been four thousand dollars a year; now

they will range within fifteen hundred. Twen-

ty-five hundred dollars saved here will be no

small sum in my business."

"And we shall be as contented in our present

as we were in our former style of living," said

Mrs. Porterfield, who was a strong-minded wo-

man, and just the one to stand up bravely beside

a man in the battle of life.

"I don't know," returned the merchant. "I'm

afraid not. What most concerns me, is the fact

that our children are deprived of those educa-

tional advantages I so much desired to give them.

It troubles me whenever it crosses my mind, to

think that Edward had to be taken from college

just as his more important studies commenced.

These can never be resumed, for, ere I recover

myself, he will be a man."

"There are always two things presented to

us," said Mrs. Porterfield, "what we desire, and

what is. What we desire, we always think best

to feel satisfied with what is."

"And you are right," returned her husband.—

"But I cannot come into your better state of

mind. I wish that I could."

"Think less about what you cannot help, and

more about your present daily duties, and you

will come into this better state of mind much

more easily than you suppose."

"No doubt you are right in that," said Mr. Por-

terfield, smiling. "The receipt is of the simplest

kind, and I will try to use it."

Notwithstanding the reefed sails and lightened

hull, the storm, when its violence increased,

threatened to drive the vessel in which Porter-

field's earthly goods were all ventured, beneath

the waves. In order to keep afloat, if possible,

resort was had to the most doubtful and desper-

ate financial operation, the making of notes that

do not represent a mercantile transaction, and

throwing them into market for discount—or, in

other words, as it is vulgarly called, to be shaved.

This manufactured paper, was, through the

aid of friends, issued pretty extensively. But it

availed not. Porterfield's barque went under

ere he had diminished his actual property some

thousands of dollars in the payment of enormous

discounts.

"Have you heard the news?" asked a broker

of Mr. Willey, one morning.

"What is it? who has failed now?"

"Porterfield."

"Good! I expected that," returned the law-

yer. "Is it a bad failure?"

"Don't know. Some say it is, and some say

it is not. His paper was dishonored yesterday,

and there is a plenty of it in the market."

"Ah! have you any of it?"

"Yes. About a thousand dollars that I was

fool enough to shave, when I saw by the face of

it, it was only made paper."

"What do you expect to get for it?"

"I'll tell you what I'll take."

"What?"

"Fifty cents in the dollar."

"How long has it to run?"

"Five hundred are due to-day, and five hun-

dred will mature in a week."

"Has a meeting of creditors been called?"

"I believe so."

"Do you know any of them?"

"Yes." And the broker named over half a

dozen who were creditors.

The lawyer thought a moment, and then

said:—

"I'll buy your claim, at fifty cents."

"Very well, so much saved at any rate."

"And I should like to have four or five thou-

sand more at the same price, provided the paper

has already matured, or will fall due in the course

of a week."

"You can be accommodated, without any

doubt," said the broker.

"Will you try to get it for me?"

"I will."

On the next day, notes amounting to four thou-

sand dollars, were brought to the lawyer, who

bought them at half the sum they demanded.

Such of these as were not already under pro-

test for non-payment, were noted on the days

they fell due, and immediately sent out. Willey

was rejoiced to find that his wife was the first

issued, and that his judgments against the debt-

ors' property would therefore take the preced-

ence.

"Safe enough!" he said to himself with much

apparent pleasure, when clearly satisfied of this

fact. "I shall make twenty-five hundred by that

operation, and put Porterfield just where he

ought to be."

At the third meeting of the creditors, which

convened for the purpose of final action, looking

to the relief of the debtor by a liberal exten-

sion of time and abatement of claims, the fact

that suits for five thousand dollars had been

commenced, was unexpectedly announced, and

changed at once the whole aspect of things.

One of the creditors, an old merchant of lib-

eral feelings, who was respected and esteemed

by all who knew him, undertook the task of as-

certaining from Willey, who was known to be

the suing party, as to his intentions, and if they

were directly adverse to the proposed measure

of relief, to endeavor to change them. How

fruitless was this effort has been seen. It was

then proposed to pay off his claim, but to this a

majority of creditors objected. It ended in the

debtor's making an assignment of his property

for the benefit of all.

Willey, at the final dividend, got fifty-five

cents on the dollar, thus making about ten per

cent instead of a hundred, as he expected.—

But he was content. He had not lost anything,

and Porterfield was broken up, root and branch,

and his family reduced to great extremity.

This took place when Porterfield was forty-

five years old, and Willey forty.

Three or four months after the final break-

ing-up took place, the lawyer met his victim in the

street. It was the first time he had seen him

since he had so heartlessly destroyed his business.

